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UNCLAS VILNIUS 001345

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR CODEL SENSENBRENNER

REF(S): STATE 00228697

1. Post warmly welcomes CODEL Sensenbrenner and is pleased to grant country clearance for the period of January 10-12, 2006 for the purpose of high-level discussions regarding visa policy in Lithuania.

2. Ambassador Mull will greet the CODEL on its arrival at the airport. The Embassy's point of contact for your visit, Consul James Fellows, will also meet the CODEL at the airport. Mr. Fellows' contact information is TEL: +370-5-266-5591; FAX: +370-5-266-5590; MOB: 370-6-872-4443; E-MAIL: FellowsJD@state.gov.

3. The American Embassy address is Akmenu 6. The 24-hour Embassy telephone number is +370-5-2665500; fax number is +370-5-2665510. All operators speak English.

4. Hotel reservations have been made, as requested reftel, for the nights of January 10-12 at Ramada hotel for business rooms at the rate of 126 USD per night. The room rate includes all taxes and breakfast. Cancellations can be made at any time without penalty. The hotel is located at Subaciaus 2; tel: +370-5-264-6414; fax: +370-5-255-3311.

5. Your hotel, most restaurants and many stores accept credit cards. However, it is a good idea to have some cash on hand since much of Lithuania still operates on a cash economy. The Embassy cashier is available for check-cashing services from 0900 to 1300 Monday-Friday and there are automatic teller machines (ATMs) around the city. There is also an exchange service at the airport at commercial rates (comparable to those at the Embassy).

6. Lithuania is a relatively safe country with very little anti-American sentiment. Vilnius has a low criminal threat level. However, visitors should take the same precautions that they would in any other large urban area. Crimes of opportunity, such as pickpocketing, car break-ins, and theft, are most common. Most crimes happen at night or in the early morning hours. After dark, visitors should stay in pairs; exercise common sense; and avoid isolated areas. Visitors are encouraged to leave any valuables in their hotel safety deposit boxes. Use of public transportation is not recommended. Should you wish a security briefing upon arrival, please contact the RSO at tel: +370-5-2665621.

7. For additional information about Vilnius, you may wish to log on to www.inyourpocket.com and select Vilnius.

8. Visitors are advised to arrange taxi service through their hotel or the Embassy. However, taxis that are parked in front of the airport are reliable. Be aware of rogue taxi drivers who approach you offering their taxi service. Always inquire what the fare will be in advance. The trip into town from the airport should cost around \$5.00-\$10.00 (depending on exchange rate and day of the week).

9. Visas are not required if stay is less than 90 days.

10. The climate in Vilnius during the winter is dark, cold and wet with snow and ice. Boots, jacket and gloves are necessary.

MULL